

GEORGE A. ROMERO

EMPIRE OF THE DEAD #1

ACT TWO

ILLUSTRATED BY
DALIBOR TALAJIC

MARVEL

PARENTAL
ADVISORY!
NOT FOR KIDS!



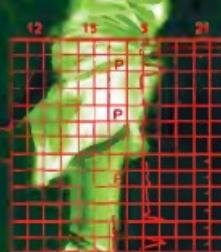
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NYC UNDEAD UPDATE!



MAYOR CHANDRAKE



PENNY JONES



PAUL BARNUM



XAVIER

FIVE YEARS AFTER THE DEAD FIRST WALKED, NEW YORK CITY HAS BECOME A FORTRESS OF ISOLATION AGAINST THE UNDEAD PLAGUE VIA THE MILITARISTIC FORCES OF MAYOR CHANDRAKE AND HIS CABAL OF SECRET VAMPIRES!

PENNY JONES, A MEDICAL SCIENTIST, AND ZOMBIE WRANGLER PAUL BARNUM ARE WORKING TO TAME A ZOMBIE (AND FORMER SWAT OFFICER) NAMED XAVIER WHO NOT ONLY EXHIBITS INTELLIGENCE BUT SHOWED COMPASSION, SAVING A STREET URCHIN NAMED JO.

HOWEVER, IT'S NOT ALL GOOD NEWS...THERE IS DIVISION IN THE VAMPIRE RANKS AS MAYOR CHANDRAKE'S OWN NEPHEW BILL MAKES MOVES AGAINST HIM...A WOMAN WAS ATTACKED BY A PAIR OF ROGUE VAMPIRES AND TAKEN TO PENNY'S HOSPITAL...AND A BAND OF SOUTHERN REBELS LED BY DIXIE PEACH PLAN TO OVERTAKE NYC.

NEW YORK REMAINS A DANGEROUS PLACE. BE PREPARED. STAY VIGILANT.
AIM FOR THE BRAIN.

BROUGHT TO YOU BY THE 
CITY COUNCIL FOR SECURITY:

GEORGE ROMERO WRITER **DALIBOR TALAJIC** ARTIST
RAIN BEREDO COLOR ARTIST **VC'S CORY PETIT** LETTERER
ALEXANDER LOZANO COVER **FRANCESCO FRANCAVILLA** VARIANT COVER
IRENE Y. LEE PRODUCTION **PETER GRUNWALD** PRODUCER
JAKE THOMAS ASSISTANT EDITOR **BILL ROSEMAN** EDITOR
AXEL ALONSO EDITOR IN CHIEF **JOE QUESADA** CHIEF CREATIVE OFFICER **DAN BUCKLEY** PUBLISHER

UNDERNEATH THE ARENA.



JUST STOPPING
BY TO SEE WHAT
SORT OF PROGRESS
YOU'VE BEEN
MAKING.

NEW
RECRUITS.
EARLY
STAGES.

THIS ISN'T
PROGRESS. EVERYONE
KNOWS THESE CREATURES
ARE VIOLENT. ALL YOU'VE
DONE IS TRAIN THEM TO
USE WEAPONS! BARBARIC
WEAPONS, AT THAT.

DR.
JONES
BELIEVES
THAT--

IT
KEEPS THEM
OCCUPIED...

...AND
IT TEACHES
THEM TO BE
DISCIPLINED.

WHO
ARE YOU?









LANGDON'S PUB.

I HAVE ONE BAD EYE BUT MY OTHER EYE CAN STILL SEE! AND IT SEES A CITY THAT HAS GONE TO RUIN...UNDER THIS PRESENT ADMINISTRATION.

SO I'M ASKING FOR YOUR VOTE TO ELECT ME AS THE MAYOR OF NEW YORK.

JUST MORE OF THE SAME.

NOTHIN'S GONNA CHANGE.

NOTHIN' EVER CHANGES, 'CEPT FOR YOU AND ME, WE GET OLDER.

I'LL PUT A STOP TO BIG SPENDING, A STOP TO BIG ENTITLEMENTS, A STOP TO BIG CITY GOVERNMENT!

GOOD. THAT IS A GOOD THING TO SAY.

I MIGHT BE RELATED TO RONALD CHANDRAKE, BUT I AM NO...RONALD CHANDRAKE!!!



BOSS, IS IT NOT DANGEROUS FOR BILL TO BE SAYING THINGS LIKE THAT?

YES, IT IS. COMPLETELY AND CERTAINLY AND WONDERFULLY DANGEROUS.

PERHAPS HIS UNCLE WILL WANT TO MAKE HIM...BE QUIET.

THAT IS CORRECT, BIG LOUIE...

I'M COUNTING ON IT...



UNDER THE ARENA





COLUMBIA HOSPITAL.







CHANDRAKE'S APARTMENT.

ON OUR SIDE OF THE TUNNEL, TWO BORDER GUARDS WERE SHOT AND KILLED.

NOW, ON THE JERSEY SIDE, A TOLL BOOTH HAS BEEN DESTROYED.



DESTROYED?



VAPORIZED.



TERRORISTS. SHOULD I BE WORRIED?

IT'S MY JOB TO DO THE WORRYING. I JUST FELT THAT YOU SHOULD BE INFORMED.



THANK YOU. WOULD YOU LIKE A DRINK?

I APPRECIATE THE OFFER, SIR, BUT NO. IT MIGHT REDUCE MY ABILITY... TO WORRY.



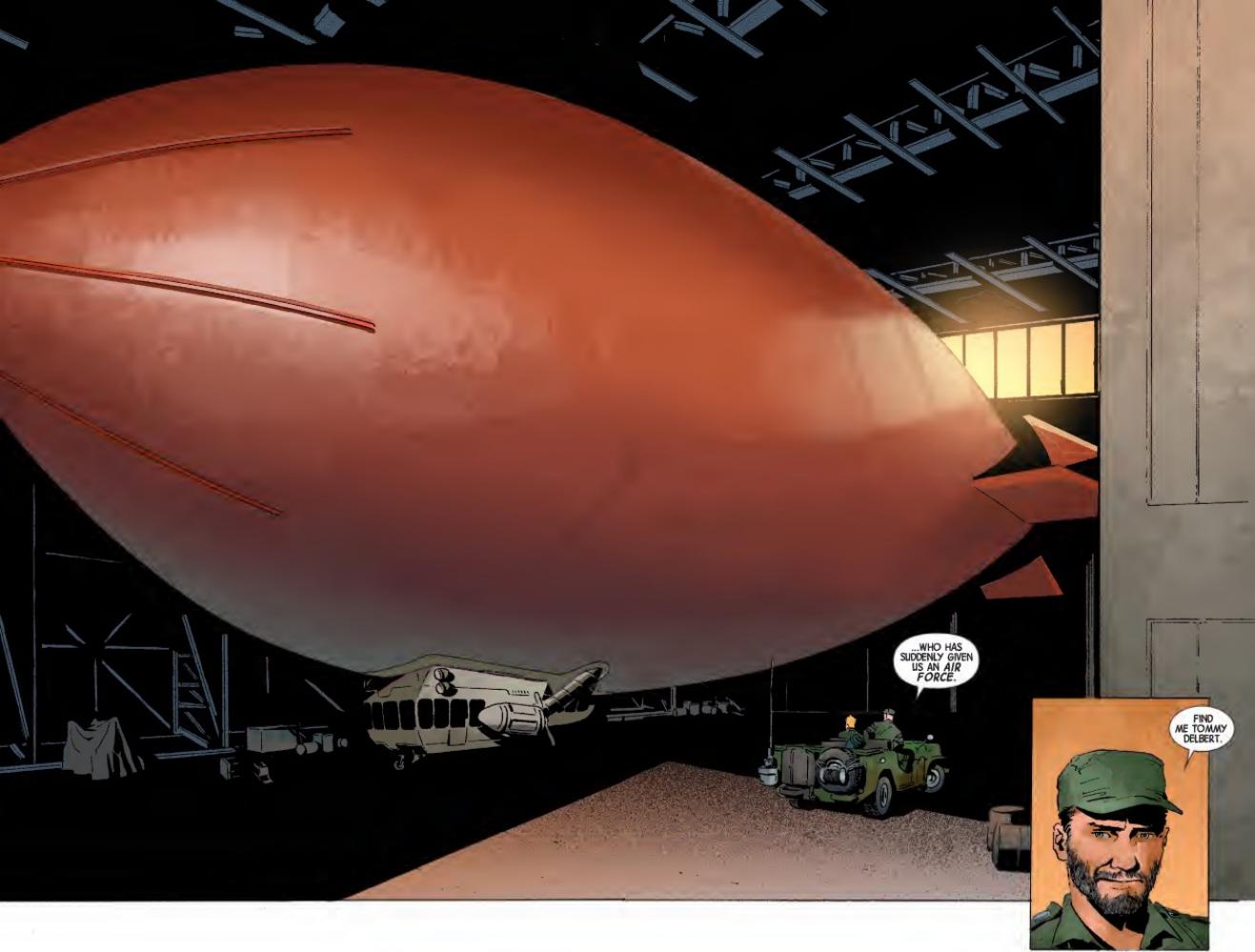
NEWARK,
NEW JERSEY.

IT'S GETTIN'
TO BE MORNIN'.
WE BEST TUCK IN
SOMEWHERE.

HOW DOES
ALL THESE
VEHICLES JUST...
TUCK IN?

THIS IS A
WAREHOUSE
DISTRICT. WE'LL
FIND US A
WAREHOUSE.

PRAY THE
LORD...

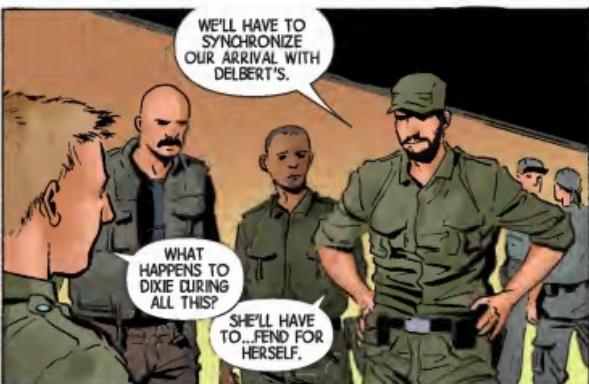




NOT MUCH DIFFERENT
THAN THE CHOPPERS
I BEEN FLYIN'.

YESSIR, I
B'LEVE I CAN
GET THIS PUPPY
OFF THE
GROUND.

MUSIC
TO MY EARS.
PURELY.



UPTOWN.

NEVER HAD A
POLICE ESCORT
BEFORE.









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BUT IT'S NOT ALL GOOD NEWS. THERE IS DISSENSION IN THE RANKS AS MAYOR CHANDRAKE'S OWN NEPHEW BILL MAKES MOVES AGAINST HIM, WHILE A BAND OF SOUTHERN REBELS PLAN TO LEAVE THEIR LEADER, DIXIE PEACH, IN THE LURCH AND INVADE NYC EARLY IN A NEWLY DISCOVERED BLIMP! MEANWHILE, TWO WOMEN WERE VICTIMS OF UNSANCTIONED VAMPIRE ATTACKS, ONE IN A BROTHEL, THE OTHER TAKEN TO PENNY'S HOSPITAL, WHERE SHE BEGAN TO EXPERIENCE A STRANGE HUNGER...

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COLUMBIA HOSPITAL.

DR. JONES.
DOES SHE HAVE
TO BE STRAPPED
IN THIS WAY?

CAN'T TAKE A
CHANCE ON MELODY
GOING FOR A SLEEP-
WALK AGAIN,
MRS. COOPER.

I DON'T
UNDERSTAND. HER
FEVER IS LOWER THAN
WHEN SHE WAS FIRST
ADMITTED. SED-RATE, ALSO
LOWER. CULTURES...BLOOD,
STOOL, URINE...ALL
NEGATIVE. SHE SHOULD
BE IMPROVING!
BUT...

BUT
WHAT?
SHE'S
HEMOLIZING.

WHAT
DOES THAT
MEAN?

HER BLOOD
COUNT IS IMPOSSIBLY
LOW. HER RED BLOOD
CELLS SEEM TO BE...
DESTROYING ONE
ANOTHER.

WHAT
COULD BE
CAUSING
THAT?

NOTHING
IN THE
TEXTBOOKS.

NOT IN...
COMMONLY
USED TEXTBOOKS,
ANYWAY.

BARNUM'S
OFFICE
TRAILER.





REMEMBER I TOLD YOU ABOUT THE YOUNG WOMAN SOME STUDENTS BROUGHT IN OFF THE STREET?

THE ONE WITH ALL THE STAB WOUNDS?

SHE OUGHT TO BE HEALING FROM THOSE WOUNDS. BUT SHE'S NOT! THERE'S SOMETHING WRONG WITH HER BLOOD. AND I CAN'T DECIPHER IT.



HEMOGLLOBIN. CELLS THAT BRING OXYGEN INTO THE BLOOD-STREAM AND MAKE IT LOOK RED. THIS WOMAN'S BLOOD LOOKS LIKE WATER! HER RED CELLS HAVEN'T BEEN FUNCTIONING FOR DAYS!



YES. IMPOSSIBLE. THERE ARE... NO SUCH THINGS... AS VAMPIRES.

BENEATH THE ARENA.

DID YOU EVER READ "ROBIN HOOD"? I MEAN, BACK WHEN YOU COULD READ.



SIR KNIGHT,
I DUB THEE...
LITTLE
JOHN.







NO ONE HAS
ANSWERED MY
QUESTION. I WILL
POLITELY ANSWER
YOURS.

THIS...IS WHO I
AM. YOU DO NOT, AT
THIS POINT IN TIME, NEED
TO KNOW ANYTHING
MORE.

ALLOW ME TO
ASK YOU ONCE AGAIN...
ONCE AGAIN...MEANING
THIS IS YOUR LAST CHANCE
TO ANSWER. WHO THE
HELL ARE YOU?

S'LONG AS
YOU GOT THEM
CANNONS POINTED
AT ME, Y'AIN'T
GONNA B'LIEVE
ANYTHING I
TELL YA SO...GO
'HEAD AND
SHOOT.

THEY'RE WITH
ME. I HAVE REASON
TO TRUST THEM.

WHAT DO
YOU WANT,
RUNYON? WHY
ARE YOU
HERE?

I AM HERE
TO IMPROVE
YOUR LIVING
CONDITIONS. IS
THERE, SOMEPLACE
IN THIS CLUMP, A
TELEVISION
SET?



THEN, AS THE FRENCH SAY, VOY-LA...UNCLE CHANDRAKE IS ALL OF A SUDDEN YESTERDAY'S HISTORY.





BUTTERCUP'S
BROTHEL.



YOU'VE HAD
THREE... "TREATMENTS."
THE FOURTH, WHICH WE
ARE HERE TO ADMINISTER,
WILL MAKE YOU ONE
OF US. **FOREVER.**

FOREVER...

THERE ARE
THINGS YOU
MUST KNOW.

WE DON'T
ENTER INTO THIS
CONTRACT FOR
MONEY. WE DO IT
FOR POWER.

I DON'T
CARE ABOUT
THAT.

YOU WILL
COME TO CARE. YOU
MIGHT, ONE DAY, BECOME
A MASTER. BUT UNTIL
THEN THERE WILL
ALWAYS BE... A MASTER
ABOVE YOU.

CONTRARY TO POPULAR
MYTHOLOGY, YOU WILL NOT BECOME
A "SHAPE-CHANGER." YOU WON'T
BE ABLE TO TURN YOURSELF INTO A BAT
AND FLY AWAY. YOUR REFLECTION WILL
APPEAR IN ANY MIRROR THAT YOU
PASS. SUNLIGHT WILL NOT INCINERATE
YOU, NOR WILL A CRUCIFIX. THESE
THINGS WILL ONLY MAKE YOU
UNCOMFORTABLE.

AS FOR THE BENEFITS,
THERE ARE MANY. YOUR WOUNDS,
UNLESS FATAL, WILL HEAL VERY
QUICKLY. YOU WILL NEVER CONTRACT
AN ILLNESS, EXCEPT POSSIBLY FOR
AN...EMOTIONAL ILLNESS. YOU'LL FIND
THAT YOUR SENTIMENTS WILL BE
RUNNING, AT ALL TIMES,
ON HIGH OCTANE.





THE ARENA

NEW
RECRUITS IS
COMIN' ALONG
JUST FINE,
BOSS.

YEAH, BUT
WHAT'S THAT
KID DOIN' DOWN
THERE?



DON'T
SWING THE
SWORD, YOU
GOTTA PUSH IT.
PUSH, PUSH,
PUSH!



RRRAARGH!

FOOOOD!



LEAVE YER
WIFHER @
EALONE!







NEW JERSEY.









MARVEL

3 of 5

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BUT IT'S NOT ALL GOOD NEWS. A MAN NAMED RUNYON PLAYS POLITICAL GAMES, PITTING MAYOR CHANDRAKE'S OWN NEPHEW BILL AGAINST HIM WHILE QUIETLY BACKING DARK HORSE CANDIDATE (AND VAMPIRE) CHILLY DOBBS. A BAND OF SOUTHERN REBELS PLAN TO INVADE NYC, HAVING PERFORMED A TEST ATTACK ON SECAUCUS, NEW JERSEY! A VICTIM OF AN UNSANCTIONED VAMPIRE ATTACK WAS TAKEN TO PENNY'S HOSPITAL, WHERE SHE EXHIBITS ALARMING BODILY CHANGES AND A STRANGE HUNGER...

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SECALCUS,
NEW JERSEY.

I WAS IN
'GHANISTAN
AND I NEVER
SAW WORSE
DEN DIS.

LIKE IT WAS
DONE BY SOME...
WAR MACHINE
OR SOMETHING.
BIG GUNS, OR...
SOMETHING.
I DUNNO.

NOT
GUNS...

...THIS WAS
DONE BY AN
AIRPLANE.

HOW
DO YOU
KNOW?

WHOLE
BUNCHA FOLKS
HEARD IT FLYIN'
OVER, DETECTIVE.
THEY SAID IT DIDN'T
SOUND LIKE A JET.
MORE LIKE ONE
O' THEM...

...OLD-FASHIONED
PROPELLER
JOBS, YOU
KNOW?

PROPELLERS.
HMM...

DIRIGIBLES...THAT FLY OVER
SPORTING EVENTS...USE
PROPELLERS TO MOVE THEM
THROUGH THE AIR. IF I AM NOT
MISTAKEN, THERE ARE STORAGE
HANGARS RIGHT HERE IN
NEW JERSEY.

NEWARK,
NEW JERSEY.



MAYOR
CHANDRAKE'S
APARTMENT.





EVERY MAN WHO I MEET IS EITHER INNOCENT OR GUILTY...OF SOMETHING. IF HE IS INNOCENT, I DO NOT NEED TO SHAKE HIS HAND. IF HE IS GUILTY, I DO NOT WANT TO. THIS IS NOT TO SUGGEST, MISTER MAYOR, THAT YOU FALL INTO EITHER CATEGORY.

I UNDERSTAND PERFECTLY. I'VE BEEN KNOWN TO EMPLOY...SIMILAR STANDARDS.

THIS WAS SUPPOSED TO BE PRIVATE.

THIS IS MINDY GREEN, MY CAMPAIGN MANAGER. THAT'S AS PRIVATE AS IT GETS IN ELECTION SEASON.

YOU MUST BE HERE FOR A REASON, GENTLEMEN. WHAT IS IT?

YES, THERE IS A REASON. WE ARE INVESTIGATING SOME VERY PECULIAR EVENTS. FIRST, TWO BORDER GUARDS WERE KILLED ON THE MANHATTAN SIDE OF THE HOLLAND TUNNEL.

YES, I WAS INFORMED ABOUT THAT.

...LAST NIGHT, HALF OF SECAUCUS WAS TURNED INTO PEBBLES BY WHAT WITNESSES SAY SOUNDED LIKE SOME KIND OF OLD-FASHIONED BOMBER.

NEXT, A TOLL-BOOTH WAS DESTROYED... DESTROYED! ERASED...ON THE JERSEY SIDE. AND NEXT...

THANKFULLY, DETECTIVE, WE ARE IN NEW YORK, NOT SECAUCUS, NEW JERSEY.

THE HOLLAND TUNNEL INCIDENT WAS ON THIS SIDE OF THE HUDSON.

WE'RE SPECULATIN'...JUST SPEC-ULATIN'...THAT SOME BAD GUY MIGHTA BROUGHT SOMETHIN' ACROSS THE RIVER. EXPLOSIVES? SOME KINDA GERM, MAYBE?



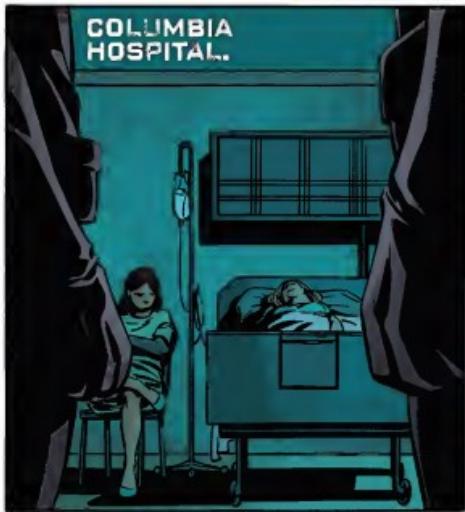
THAT'S A BIT OF A STRETCH, DON'T YOU THINK?







COLUMBIA
HOSPITAL.





MADISON SQUARE GARDEN.





I HOPE
YOU'RE NOT
TOO...DISTURBED
BY THE THINGS
I'VE BEEN
SAYING.

DISTURBED?
OF COURSE NOT.
I DON'T EXPECT
YOU TO SHARE
MY...POLITICAL
VIEWS.

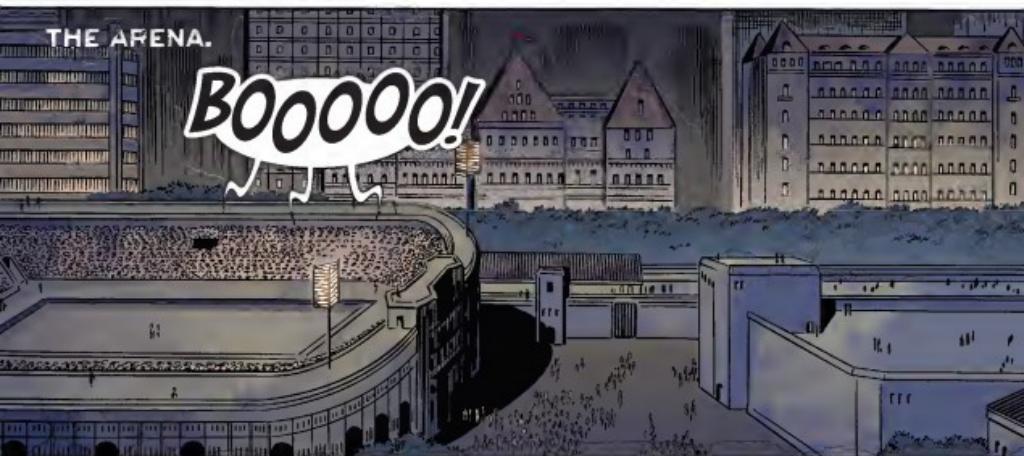






THE ARENA.

BOOOOO!



LADIES AND GENTS, BOYS AND GIRLS...YOU REMEMBER HIM FROM THE OLD DAYS...MIGHTY JOE YOUNNNNG!!!

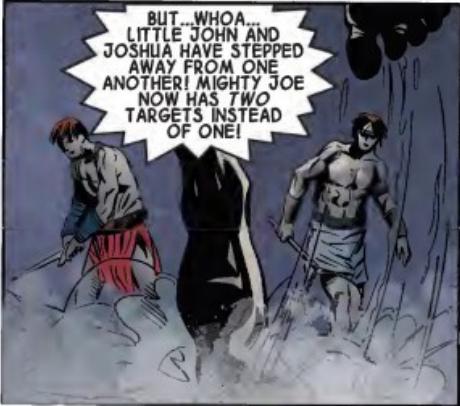


JOE IS GOING RIGHT TO WORK!



T-CHING

BUT...WHOA...
LITTLE JOHN AND
JOSHUA HAVE STEPPED
AWAY FROM ONE
ANOTHER! MIGHTY JOE
NOW HAS TWO
TARGETS INSTEAD OF ONE!



SWING AND A MISS! MIGHTY JOE HAS BEEN THROWN OFF-BALANCE!



AND HERE COMES JOSHUA!
IT SEEMS IMPOSSIBLE,
BUT HE AND LITTLE JOHN ARE WORKING TOGETHER!





OUTSIDE
THE ARENA.

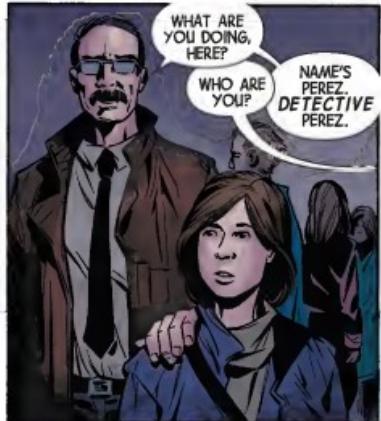


YOU
KID INTO
THE BUS!

IN A
PIG'S EYE,
MISTER.

WHAT ARE
YOU DOING,
HERE?

NAME'S
PEREZ.
DETECTIVE
PEREZ.



I'M ACTING ON ORDERS
SUPPOSED TO ROUND UP
HOMELESS KIDS. TOO
MANY OF 'EM ON
THE STREETS.

I'VE HEARD
OF NO SUCH
ORDERS.

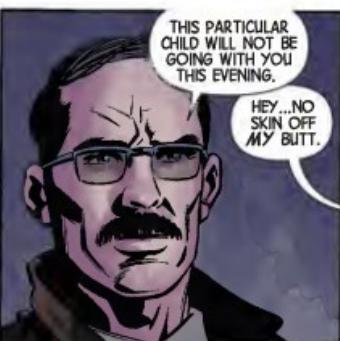
PROBABLY ABOVE
YOUR PAY GRADE. WE
TAKE 'EM TO A SAFE
PLACE, HOT MEAL, WARM
BED. IT'S FOR THEIR
OWN GOOD.



THIS PARTICULAR
CHILD WILL NOT BE
GOING WITH YOU
THIS EVENING.

HEY...NO
SKIN OFF
MY BUTT.

I AM VERY SUSPICIOUS. IF YOU
SEE THOSE MEN ANOTHER TIME,
DO NOT DO ANYTHING
THEY TELL YOU TO DO.



PENNY JONES' LAB.

I
HOPE YOU
APPROVE.

CLICK

I BROUGHT
IN ALL THE BEST
CONSULTANTS.
SPARED NO
EXPENSE ON THE
EQUIPMENT.

I CAN
SEE THAT.

IT'S...
EVERYTHING
I COULD EVER
HAVE WANTED.
THANK YOU.







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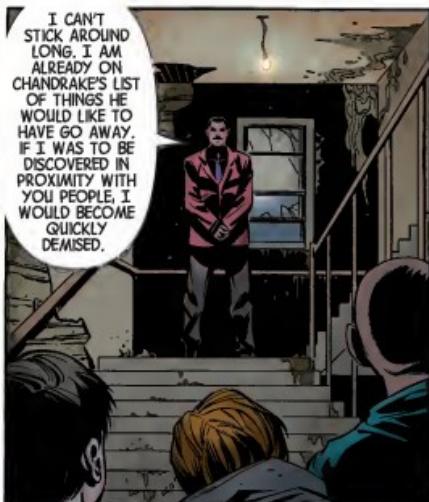
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MANHATTAN'S WEST SIDE.



I DON'T
WANT TO "LIVE
FANCY."

THEN THESE
DIGS OUGHTA
SUITE YOU JUST
FINE.

I WANT...
CHANGE! REAL
CHANGE! I WANT
THIS CITY TO BE RUN
WITH RESPECT FOR
THE LAW! NOT THE
CROOKED WAY
THAT CHANDRAKE
RUNS THINGS.

MISTER DOBBS...
I HAVE INVESTED VERY
LARGE AMOUNTS OF
LETTUCE ON THE BET THAT
YOU ARE A GUY WHO, ALL
YOU WANT IS FOR OTHER
GUYS TO PLAY YOU FAIR.
I AM WITH YOU. ALL
THE WAY.

I APPRECIATE
YOUR CONFIDENCE IN
ME. IT'S JUST...WELL...
WHY ARE YOU SO
CONFIDENT?

SIMPLE.
THERE'S NO WAY YOU
CAN LOSE! EVERYBODY
KNOWS CHANDRAKE IS A
PHONY. EVERYONE KNOWS
HIS NEPHEW WAS A PHONY.
YOU, MY FRIEND, ARE
THE REAL MCCOY!

ASHLEY, I'M
NOT SO SURE ABOUT
THIS DOBBS FELLA.
HOPE WE HOOKED OUR
CABOOSE ONTO THE
RIGHT TRAIN.

NOBODY IN
THIS TOWN KNOWS
ME AND ASHLEY. DON'T YA
THINK WE COULD STEP
OUTSIDE? YOU KNOW...
FOR A LITTLE TOKE?

YOU
CARRYIN',
DIXIE?

ONLY IN
MY BOOTS.
CHIEF.







PENNY JONES' LAB.

HELLO.

HELLO.

GOT TIME FOR A COFFEE?

ER...NOT RIGHT NOW, PAUL.

WHAT'S SO IMPORTANT YOU CAN'T BREAK AWAY?

BLOOD SAMPLE.

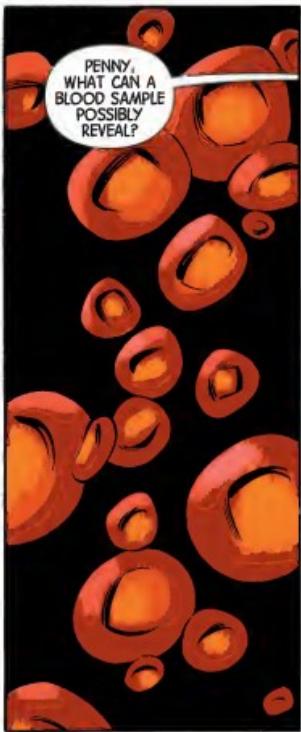
FROM THAT PATIENT YOU HAD IN THE ICU?

YES, THE ONE WHO... DISAPPEARED!

HER MOTHER PROBABLY TOOK HER HOME.

I'VE TRIED TO CALL. NO ANSWER. THE MOTHER HASN'T SHOWN UP AT WORK.

YOU BELIEVE SOMETHING IN YOUR PATIENT'S BLOOD CAN HELP YOU SOLVE THE MYSTERY?





MAYOR CHANDRAKE'S
APARTMENT.





I WAS NEVER AS NAIVE. I KNEW, ALL THE WHILE, THAT YOU WERE SECURING ME. I ALLOWED IT TO HAPPEN. I WANTED IT TO HAPPEN.



INTIMACY? THAT FLEW OUT THE WINDOW YEARS AGO. EVEN GOOD OLD-FASHIONED ANIMAL SEX IS A THING OF THE PAST!







"WITH AN ASSIST FROM A BENGAL TIGER NAMED..."

"LEMME GUESS.
ZANZIBAR?"





MAYOR CHANDRAKE'S APARTMENT.

THIS MAYOR
IS FEATHERING HIS
OWN NEST! HE WINS...
WE ALL LOSE!



HE'S GOTTA
BE SOMEWHERE
IN THE CITY.



WITH ALL OUR
TECHNOLOGY, WE
OUGHTA BE ABLE TO
TRACK HIM.



WE WILL FIND
HIM, SIR. IT'S JUST
A MATTER OF...HOW
LONG WILL IT
TAKE.





HOW LONG DO
YOU THINK IT WOULD
TAKE ME TO REPLACE
YOU, SOLDIER?



NOT VERY
LONG AT ALL
SIR.

WELL, THAT'S
HOW LONG YOU
HAVE TO FIND
THIS GUY!



DOBBS CAN'T
DAMAGE YOU. I
MEAN...WHO IS HE?
SOME SCHMUCK!
WAY OFF THE
RADAR.



HE STAYS
OFF THE RADAR
LONG ENOUGH. ALL
OF A SUDDEN HE'S
ON THE RADAR!
THAT'S HOW IT IS
THESE DAYS.

TAPPAN ZEE BRIDGE.



PARK STREET TAVERN.

WHAT'S GOIN' ON, BOSS?

WHAT D'YA MEAN?

YOU BEEN WALKIN' 'ROUND LIKE A HOG WITH AN AXE IN ITS HEAD. WHAT'S YOUR TROUBLE?

SLIPSHOD...SUPPOSE YOU KNEW THAT ONE OF YOUR FRIENDS WAS DOING SOMETHING WRONG. I MEAN...REALLY...BAD, BAD WRONG. WOULD YOU BLOW THE WHISTLE ON THE GLY?

IF HE WAS A REAL FRIEND... SAY, LIKE YOU...NO, SIR, I WOULD NOT BLOW THAT WHISTLE.

WHAT IF...HE WASN'T QUITE AS CLOSE AS YOU AND ME?

WELL... I GUESS I'D HAFTA...THINK TWICE.

THANK YOU, SLIPSHOD. YOU HAVE BEEN ABSOLUTELY NO HELP AT ALL.

CENTRAL PARK.

CRASH





I RECOGNIZE YOU. YOU'RE THE GUY WHO RUNS THE ARENA. WHAT'S YOUR PROBLEM, PAL? CAN'T A GUY HAVE A LITTLE SNACK? OR IS IT THAT YOU WANT HER FOR YOURSELF?

GET OUT OF HERE.

I DON'T THINK SO. I'M STILL HUNGRY.



THIS...
CAN'T...GO...
ON.





MARVEL

5 of 5

PARENTAL
ADVISORY!
NOT FOR KIDS!

GEORGE A. ROMERO

EMPIRE OF THE DEAD

ACT TWO

ILLUSTRATED BY
DALIBOR TALAJIC



D. Talajic

NYC UNDEAD UPDATE!



MAYOR CHANDRAKE



PENNY JONES



PAUL BARNUM



XAVIER

FIVE YEARS AFTER THE DEAD FIRST WALKED, NEW YORK CITY HAS BECOME A FORTRESS OF ISOLATION AGAINST THE UNDEAD PLAGUE VIA THE MILITARISTIC FORCES OF MAYOR CHANDRAKE AND HIS CABAL OF SECRET VAMPIRES!

PENNY JONES, A MEDICAL SCIENTIST, AND ZOMBIE WRANGLER PAUL BARNUM ARE WORKING TO TAME A ZOMBIE (AND FORMER SWAT OFFICER) NAMED XAVIER WHO NOT ONLY EXHIBITS INTELLIGENCE BUT SHOWED COMPASSION, SAVING A STREET URCHIN NAMED JO.

BUT IT'S NOT ALL GOOD NEWS. A MAN NAMED RUNYON PULLS STRINGS TO QUIETLY BACK DARK HORSE MAYORAL CANDIDATE (AND VAMPIRE) CHILLY DOBBS TO CHALLENGE CHANDRAKE. A VAMPIRE VICTIM BROUGHT TO PENNY'S HOSPITAL BEGINS TO MAKE HER SUSPICIOUS AS CHANDRAKE MOVES UNCOMFORTABLY CLOSE. BARNUM THWARTS A VAMPIRE ATTACK AND DECIDES A LINE MUST BE DRAWN.

NEW YORK REMAINS A DANGEROUS PLACE. BE PREPARED. STAY VIGILANT.
AIM FOR THE BRAIN.

BROUGHT TO YOU BY THE
CITY COUNCIL FOR SECURITY:

GEORGE ROMERO WRITER **DALIBOR TALAJIC** PENCILER
RICK MAGYAR & GORAN SUDŽUKA INKERS **RAIN BEREDO** COLOR ARTIST
VC'S CORY PETIT LETTERER **ALEXANDER LOZANO** COVER ARTIST
IRENE Y. LEE PRODUCTION **PETER GRUNWALD** PRODUCER
JAKE THOMAS ASSISTANT EDITOR **BILL ROSEMANN** EDITOR
AXEL ALONSO EDITOR IN CHIEF **JOE QUESADA** CHIEF CREATIVE OFFICER **DAN BUCKLEY** PUBLISHER

COLUMBIA
HOSPITAL...





I'M SORRY. I SHOULD HAVE LISTENED. SHOULD HAVE RECOGNIZED THE SYMPTOMS.

SYMPOTMS...?

RONALD CHANDRAKE IS A VAMPIRE. AND I'M WORRIED HE MIGHT HAVE...SOMEHOW... INFECTED YOU.

BUT...YOU SAID YOURSELF...THERE'S NO SUCH THING!

THREE YEARS AGO WE ALL WOULD HAVE SAID IT WAS IMPOSSIBLE FOR THE DEAD TO GET UP AND WALK. NOW...HERE THEY ARE. ALL AROUND US.



IT'S NOT TOO LATE, PENNY. THE EFFECTS CAN BE REVERSED.

I...CAN'T BELIEVE THIS!



IF...IF THERE'S ANY TRUTH IN THIS, I SUPPOSE I NEED TO ASK...ARE YOU...?

NO
PRIVACY
HERE. I'LL
CALL YOU
TONIGHT.

WHAP



PENNY JONES' LAB.
LATER.

BZZ BZZ BZZ



MY BLOOD...
DOES SHOW
SIGNS OF...
HEMOLYZATION.



HOW COULD
YOU DO THIS
TO ME?





WHO ARE YOU? BOTH OF YOU! WHO AND... AND WHAT ARE YOU!



MAYOR CHANDRAKE'S APARTMENT.



MIDTOWN LOFT.



CALL CAME IN.
THE MAYOR'S
LOOKIN' FOR
YA.

THE MAYOR
IS ALWAYS
LOOKIN' FOR ME.
SET YOUR TRACKER
TO SIX-OH-NINE.

SIX-OH-
NINE. THAT'S
A.M.

YEAH.
THIS MOOK
IS ON THE
OPEN AIR.

WHAT
MOOK?

THE MOOK
WE'RE TRYIN'
TO FIND! CHILLY
DOBBS.

SIGNAL'S
COMIN' FROM
SOMEWHERE IN
MIDTOWN.
NOT FAR.

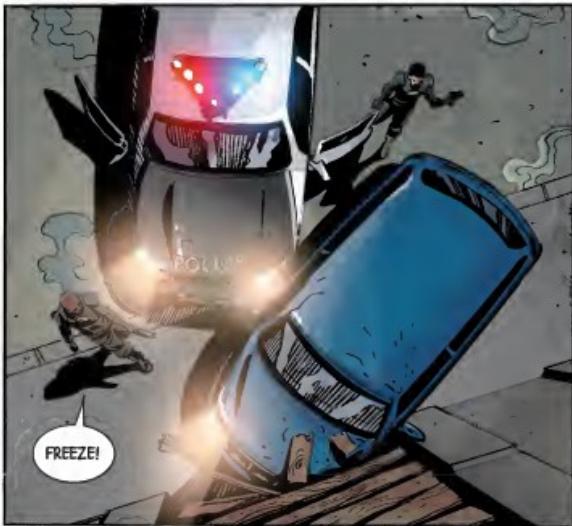
WOHA. I
ALREADY GOT
THE GUY. JUST
A BLOCK
AWAY.

WAIT,
THE SIGNAL'S
MOVING!
THEY'RE
MOBILE!

IT'S COMING FROM THAT CAR!

PUSH IT,
PUSH IT,
PUSH IT!

SKR NCH



DON'T SHOOT! I'M JUST A FLUNKY. DON'T GIVE A COCKROACH'S FART WHO WINS THE ELECTION.

WHAT'S
YOUR
NAME?

WILMOTT,
SIR. REGIS
WILMOTT.



MAYOR CHANDRAKE'S
APARTMENT.

A CAR!

BROADCASTING
PRE-RECORDED
MESSAGES. THAT'S
WHY WE CAN'T FIND
WHERE DOBBS IS
HOLED UP.

FIGURE
IT OUT!
FAST!

S'MATTER,
HUBBY? YOUR
PRIVATE DICK NOT
RISING TO THE
OCASION?

YOU HAVE
A WICKED
TONGUE,
DARLING.

I WAS TRYING
TO REACH YOU
EARLIER.

WERE YOU?
I DIDN'T KNOW.
I WAS IN PURSUIT,
SIR. OF...

MOMENTS LATER.

I'VE HAD
IT WITH THAT
GUY.

HE'S SENT
TOO MANY OF HIS
OWN DOWN THE RIVER.
WHO KNOWS WHO
MIGHT BE NEXT?

TAKE IT
EASY, MAN. HE'S
THE BOSS.

I DON'T
CARE IF YOU WERE
PURSUING JACK THE
RIPPER. WHEN I NEED
YOU, I WANT TO
KNOW THAT YOU'RE
AVAILABLE.



WHAT CAN I DO,
EXCEPT...
THIS!



BARNUM'S APARTMENT.

GIMME
A SPLASH,
WILL YA?



I MISS
YOU PAUL. MISS
YOU BAD. GUESS
I PICKED THE
WRONG GUY.

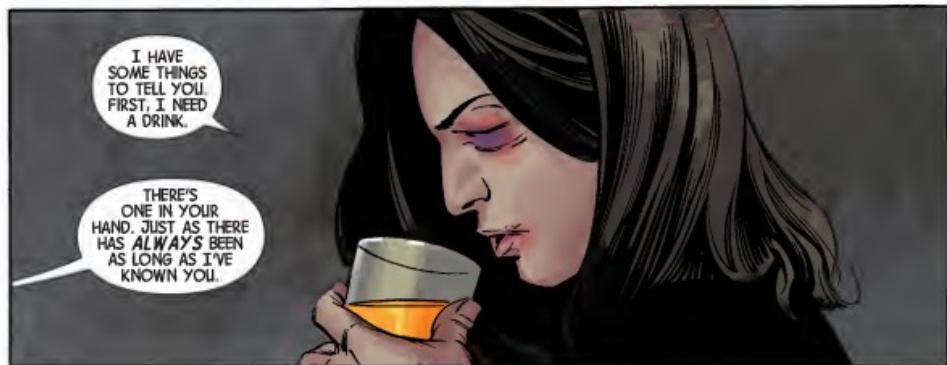


THE WAY
YOUR FACE
LOOKS, I'D SAY
YOU PICKED WAY
WRONG.



I HAVE
SOME THINGS
TO TELL YOU.
FIRST, I NEED
A DRINK.

THERE'S
ONE IN YOUR
HAND. JUST AS THERE
HAS ALWAYS BEEN
AS LONG AS I'VE
KNOWN YOU.







POLICE HEADQUARTERS.
LATER.





BENEATH THE ARENA.

I'LL KEEP THIS FOR YA, BUT IT'S YOURS. WHENEVER YOU NEED IT, YOU GOT IT.



I THINK YOU UNDERSTAND ME. BUT THERE'S TIMES WHEN I'M NOT SURE.



I THINK YOU WANT ME TO KEEP THIS KEY. IF YOU DON'T... JUST STOP ME FROM PUTTING IT INTO MY BAG.



OKAY, THEN.



PENNY JONES' LAB.



THE ARENA.





NEXT: ACT 3

